Author’s response to reviews

Title: Widening disparity in the geographic distribution of pediatricians in Japan
Altered Title: Investigating the impact of urbanization and pediatric service supply on area-specific pediatrician workforce: a study of the geographical distribution of pediatricians in Japan

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dr. Dal Poz and the Editorial Team at Human Resources for Health,

We would like to express our gratitude to you and the reviewers for their insightful comments and advice. Here, we address the comments from each of the reviewers (quoted directly, presented in bold letters) and our responses after each comment.

We have done our best to comply with the reviewers’ suggestions, and hope that our responses are satisfactory. We have also changed the title from ‘Widening disparity in the geographic distribution of pediatricians in Japan’ to ‘Investigating the impact of urbanization and pediatric service supply on area-specific pediatrician workforce: a study of the geographical distribution of pediatricians in Japan’ to better reflect the content of our study.

Our replies to Dr. Ide’s comments

1. Major Compulsory Revisions: The authors should revised the manuscript according to my previous comment; ”There are some cases where sequential paragraphs did not seem related each other at all or where there are different topics within a paragraph, which I found disorganized.” I believe potential readers will find it quite hard to follow the story in this paper unless the authors make substantial changes.

Following the reviewer’s comment, we have made substantial revisions to reorganize the manuscript. We divided paragraphs according to the topics and paid more attention to the arrangement of the paragraphs. We hope that it is now easier to read.

2. Minor Essential Revisions: As for the data from Minryoku which the authors used in the study, they commented "We have made sure that the original and the Minryoku data are in agreement with each other." If so, they must cite the original
statistics.

In the last paragraph of the Methods section, we have cited our data sources for the original statistics clearly.

Our replies to Dr. Toyabe’s comment

Basically, the authors well answered to my questions. I was almost satisfied with their answers, except that no figures were provided in their manuscript. I still think that some figures will allow readers to understand the authors’ point of view more easily.

We have added a new figure (Figure 2 in the revised manuscript) that shows the increases in pediatrician numbers for each group, as well as for subdivisions by age and gender. It was a pleasant surprise to find that this figure gave us more insight into the great differences in pediatrician number changes among the groups. We would like to thank the reviewer for his suggestion, and think this inclusion has greatly improved our manuscript.